

Corporate Social Responsibility Statement

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Purpose and Scope of this Policy Statement

CILEX (the professional association for Chartered Legal Executive Lawyers, Paralegals and other Legal Practitioners in England and Wales) is committed to ensuring that it considers the impact of the organisation on society, the environment and the economy as well as our Employees, Senior Managers and the Board of Trustees, Volunteers, Agency Staff, Members and Students.

This policy statement applies to all CILEX operations. The purpose of a Corporate Social Responsibility¹ programme is to positively contribute to all stakeholders as well as adding value for the organisation itself and ensuring that it operates in a sustainable and ethical way.

Context

Corporate Social Responsibility has become increasingly important in the recent decades in the context of tackling environmental disasters and poor labour standards² and more recently, the financial and global impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had and will continue to have on society. Keeping Corporate Social Responsibility at the heart of our organisation will garner trust and confidence amongst our Members and Stakeholders, which is crucial as we move forward.

Responsibility

This policy statement applies to all of our operations including management, office services, delivery and procurement. The Director of IT and Facilities is responsible for ensuring that the policy statement is implemented. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that rigorous processes are in place and where appropriate, employees are provided with relevant training. It is the responsibility of every employee and representative to be familiar with this policy and to ensure that the aims and objectives of the policy statement are met.

CILEX is committed to:

- conducting every aspect of our business with honesty, accountability and openness, respecting human rights and the interests of our employees, members and stakeholders.
- respecting the legitimate interests of stakeholders with whom we have dealings in the course of our business.
- maintaining the highest standards of integrity. For example, we will not promise more than we can reasonably deliver or make commitments that we cannot meet.

¹ Corporate Social Responsibility is a type of international private business self-regulation that aims to contribute to societal goals of a philanthropic, activist or charitable nature by engaging in or supporting volunteering or ethically oriented practices. The term Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to practices and policies undertaken by corporations that are intended to have a positive influence on the world. The key idea behind CSR is for corporations to pursue other pro-social objectives, in addition to maximising profits. Examples of common CSR objectives include minimising environmental externalities, promoting volunteerism among company employees and donating to charity.

² The United Nations Global Compact promotes ten principles of CR focused on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organisation's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

- Acting in a socially and environmentally responsible manner and promoting sustainable development, where possible.

Our focus areas are:

- Co-operating with our immediate community.
- To consider the environmental impacts of our products and to continually reduce the environmental impact through our sourcing of raw materials.
- To integrate sustainability considerations into our business decisions.
- To ensure that all staff are fully aware of our Sustainability commitment and are committed to implementing and improving it.
- To comply with and exceed where practicable, all applicable legislation, regulations and codes of practice.
- Engagement with members and staff and reacting in a positive and proactive manner.
- Investing for the long term through assessment, training and development.
- Acting as a responsible employer.
- Maintaining effective Health and Safety Management Systems.
- Working towards eventually gaining ISO accreditation in relation to Quality Management (ISO 9001) and Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001).

What is CILEX currently doing to show its dedication to Corporate Social Responsibility?

CILEX Foundation – Scholarship and Bursary

The CILEX Foundation is the Associated Charity representing Members of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX). We aim to support aspiring and experienced CILEX Lawyers to achieve their full potential. This can be through support with their academic journey, help if they face unexpected hardship, which might otherwise interrupt their work or studies and encouraging the broadening of their career development opportunities.

CILEX Pro Bono

We actively encourage all CILEX professionals and other legal professionals to participate with Pro Bono legal services where possible and to facilitate this we have promoted the events throughout National Pro Bono Weeks that are held annually. These events encourage CILEX members with an interest in Pro Bono work to network and engage with other like-minded professionals across the sector.

Justice Week

Justice Week exists in order to improve the ability of the public to access justice and has the following specific objectives:

- build public support and understanding for the rule of law and justice;
- increase public understanding of the role of government in the justice system; and
- identify and secure support for actions, which could improve justice.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

At CILEX we are passionate about fair and equal treatment and we believe that everyone should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential - our Members, our Staff and our Stakeholders.

The legal profession has a responsibility to ensure all are equal under the law, that everyone in our society has access to justice and that there is no place for prejudice of any kind. We adhere to the Equality Act 2010.

CILEX has one of the most diverse memberships in the legal sector³ enabled by our learning delivery that creates outstanding legal professionals, but we recognise that we must and want to do more.

Particularly, we have reflected that we have a duty to be more assertive on issues about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and do all we can to locate, challenge and fight discrimination for and on behalf of our members.

As such, we commit to the following actions:

- CILEX will consult its membership on an annual basis to hear differing perspectives from all our members who face discrimination and prejudice in the workplace. In particular, this work will allow us to understand how issues may be disproportionately affecting groups within our membership and to specifically measure the impact of barriers to inclusion affecting our BAME members.
- CILEX will launch an annual scholarship programme aimed at encouraging applications to the CILEX Law School from people who face diversity barriers to achieve their potential, reinforcing our commitment of promoting inclusivity and accessibility to the law, wherever and however it presents itself. We will be working with our charity The CILEX Foundation to administer this through them.

Wellbeing

Social value is a key driver for business and considers things like happiness, health, wellbeing and empowerment. This concept goes way beyond Corporate Social Responsibility as it drives the core business, rather than complimenting it as a rudimentary element.

There are various services and benefits available to CILEX Members and Staff with a great emphasis placed on wellbeing and mental health including:

- Access to Law Care - a free confidential advisory service offering information and support to those with mental health and wellbeing problems.

³ EDI Report (Reported Only) 2020.02 – of members who provided their gender information to CILEX 75.91% are female, of members who provided their ethnicity information to CILEX 14.64% are from the BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) population and of members who provided their sexual orientation information to CILEX 3.12% are from the LGBTQ+ community.

- Specialist Reference Groups - CILEX operates a series of virtual specialist reference groups to assist us in representing our members' interests. These groups are free for members to join and cover both protected characteristics and various practice areas.

New Ways of Working into the Future

As we are emerging from the initial response to COVID-19, CILEX is taking this as an opportunity to reflect on how the pandemic has changed our working environments.

The outcome includes:

- A permanent move to remote working: This brings potential long-term benefits, like the opportunity for greater flexibility, autonomy and work/life balance for employees and an increase in talent mobility, as a result of nationwide recruitment.
- Remote working removes the necessity for the daily commute and attending meetings in person, which in turn helps to reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, improves air quality and contributes to the government's Clean Air Strategy 2019 (Clean Air Strategy 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)).
- An improvement in sustainability due to reduction in paper, plastic, energy and water consumption and other office consumables. By allowing employees to work remotely, employers can cut down on everything from printer paper to the use of plastic. Remote workers typically create less waste during their workday preferring to use email, digital tools for messaging and online video conferencing for both internal and external meetings. Documents are also transferred electronically cutting down on the requirement for printing. There are also options for electronic notetaking such as using MS OneNote (instead of using paper or notebooks) and MS Stream in conjunction with MS Teams can be used to produce an electronic copy of a recorded meeting transcript.
- A focus on Health and Wellbeing: Health, Safety and Wellbeing have been paramount during COVID-19. New practices and workplace Health and Safety procedures have been put in place. The pandemic has also highlighted the need to focus on mental wellbeing, which CILEX is very active in promoting and nurturing with a variety of additional internal initiatives, including the availability of Virtual GP's, regular check-ins regarding wellbeing, Mental Health Champions/First Aiders and a Wellbeing Policy.
- These changes were driven by crisis and were swiftly implemented. CILEX has learnt lessons from the challenges presented and are determined to carry these lessons moving forward, in order to maintain and build upon the benefits.

Legal Framework

This statement takes into account the following relevant legislation:

- Working Time (Amendment) Regulations 2001
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001
- Maternity and Parental Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2001
- Employment Act 2002

- Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974
- Companies Act 2006 (among other things, this states that Directors need to understand the environmental and community impacts of their business operations)
- The Bribery Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010
- The Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Climate Change Act 2008

Supporting Documents

This policy statement should be read alongside the following organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

Anti-Bribery & Corruption
Anti-Money Laundering
Appointment of Consultants
Bullying and Harassment
Business Continuity Planning
Conflict of Interest
Contractor Management
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Fraud
Gifts and Hospitality
Grievance and Malpractice
Health and Safety
Modern Slavery
Procurement
Recruitment and Selection
Safeguarding
Whistleblowing Policy

Useful Contacts:

Business in the Community - www.bitc.org.uk
[Institute of Corporate Responsibility & Sustainability | ICRS](http://www.icrs.org.uk)
Institute of Business Ethics – www.ibe.org.uk
Mind - www.mind.org.uk

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